

Safety and Health Joe Dear. Among the many things Mr. Dear told the subcommittee, he said this: "Every year, work-related accidents and illnesses cost an estimated 56,000 American lives * * * At the time I was not certain if Mr. Dear and his friends over at OSHA were afraid of real OSHA reform. But for them to be using scare tactic statistics like these in an effort to puff up a supposed need for OSHA, well they must be utterly terrified of OSHA reform. Using incomplete and speculative statistics makes for incomplete and poor policy decisions. As we look to make real reforms in the way OSHA does business, we need to insure that any legislative action is based on sound and scientific information. We must use peer review to determine the effectiveness of a regulation. But when you consider how loose OSHA is willing to play with the facts, it makes you wonder whether OSHA can possibly be reformed.

Mr. Speaker, the problem with Mr. Dear's statement is that he has stated with certainty about statistics where there is considerable uncertainty. There is great disagreement and dispute about the number of fatalities from workplace illnesses. But there is a consensus about fatalities resulting from workrelated accidents, although this was not always the case. Several years ago, the Bureau of Labor Statistics initiated a new program called the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. This program obtains an actual count, rather than an estimate, of the number of workplace fatalities. That count for 1993, the latest year for which we have numbers is 6,271. The census is intended to pick up deaths caused by workplace exposures to toxic substances. Although the Bureau of Labor Statistics acknowledges that it probably does not produce a complete count of fatal illnesses. In fact, at this point in time, no one has a completely accurate count of workplace-related fatal illnesses. But the best numbers we do have are those produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. We pay the Bureau of Labor Statistics quite a bit of money to compile these statistics. I would think that the good Secretary of OSHA would use his own department's numbers rather than using the disputed, speculative numbers of others. If Mr. Dear is right, and I doubt that he is, if there are really 56,000 workplace fatalities instead of the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported number of 6,271, if the Bureau of Labor Statistics are wrong by that much, if they are only counting 7 percent of all workplace fatalities, someone down there needs to be fired, if Joe Dear is right.

Mr. Speaker, two other points about the number of fatalities should be highlighted. First, the number and rate of workplace fatalities have been declining steadily since the 1930's. This is significant when one considers that OSHA did not come into existence until the 1970's. Consequently, it is a matter of

debate as to how effective OSHA has been in reducing workplace fatalities.

Second, most workplace fatalities are not caused by factors which one would normally consider workplace hazards. For example, according to Census on Workplace Fatalities, in 1993 there were 6,271 workplace fatalities. However, over 60 percent of these fatalities were due to transportation accidents, homicides, suicides, and drownings. As one of my colleagues once said "unless OSHA teaches employees how to drive, fly, swim, and cope better, it's not going to have any impact on these deaths."

I believe the American people are frustrated by burdensome regulations. Every day small business people are pulling their hair out and fretting about regulatory mandates they can't possibly comply with. I know that many of my liberal colleagues scoff at this assertion. But I suggest that if they got out of their cloistered existence for just a short time and experience what small business people all over this country have to put up with, they would change their tune soon enough.

OSHA is one agency that has turned a reasonable and important mission into a bureaucratic nightmare for the American economy. Common sense was long ago shown the door at OSHA. OSHA is one agency that needs to be restructured, reinvented, or just plain removed.

□ 1430

THE WELFARE REFORM PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JONES). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. HILLIARD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak today on an issue that is extremely important to me. It is one that I think will affect every American. It is one that will undoubtedly create a great deal of injustice. It will create a great deal of anxiety. It will create a great deal of problems for many American families in the years to come. I speak about one element of the Republican Contract on America, the welfare reform program.

Mr. Speaker, some people have not had the opportunity to travel outside of their State or even outside of this country, but thanks to CNN and other national networks we are able to see how other people live in other countries. When we looked at the slums in India, the slums in Haiti, the slums in China, we said, my God, how can people live in these type conditions?

But if we wonder about how they eat and how they sleep, then we all ought to think about home. In America, the poorest families, the poorest of the poor can live in subsidized housing that is healthy, that is safe, that is clean.

As it stands now, through food stamps and other certain types of child

nutrition programs, lunch programs and breakfast programs we know that they can eat. Yes, we have the homeless, sometimes those who cannot find a place to stay, those that cannot find food to eat, but the majority of Americans go home to a place to stay that is heated, and they have food to eat.

That is because over the years we have been sensitive. We have understood that the American dream is not for everyone, that there are certain people born with certain inequalities that cannot be corrected by man: the blind, the disabled, and others with so many other special type of disabilities. We have made provisions for them.

And there are special circumstances where people for no reason of their own are without jobs: layoffs and other type downsizing problems.

There are some places in America on Indian reservations, in the blight belt of Alabama, Appalachia and other places in this country where there are no jobs, and for the next two or three decades there probably will not be any jobs. Many of those people migrate to our cities, creating additional problems because it is so expensive to live in the city. We have been sensitive to those needs and those situations.

But then there are situations created by nature, floods, hurricanes, mudslides, earthquakes, and other types of natural disasters, that cause problems in this country. If we do not make provisions for those Americans, then we ought to do for the least of those what we should do for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, I am submitting that the cuts in the program that have been proposed today are un-American, and those who proposed them are disloyal Americans, and they are not sensitive to the needs of other Americans.

I think that in this country one of the greatest reasons why it is the greatest country in this world is because we have always looked out for those who were unfortunate, those who were unable to fend for themselves. And in special circumstances like floods and so forth, we look out for those who ordinarily would be able to look out for themselves.

We did them a disservice this day. And I know that this issue will be debated for years to come, but if in the Senate this becomes law, then we may want to revisit those slums in Haiti, in China, and in India. Because I submit to you because of the high cost of housing in this country, because of the low wages we pay, \$4.25 an hour, a wage that no one can subsist on anywhere in America, we will have those type of slums.

It would be detrimental not only to the health and the welfare of those people who live in those places but to every American everywhere.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Senate to make sure that this bill, this Robin Hood bill, this "create heaven" bill never becomes law.